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SUBJECT: Women Entrepreneurs Brief on Successful Washington  
Conference

¶1. On November 16, the Charge hosted a working lunch for the participants in a series of State-funded exchange programs in support of the Pathways for Prosperity Conference for Women Entrepreneurs hosted by the Secretary of State. Mar????a Eugenia Brizuela de ????vila, former Foreign Minister of El Salvador and currently one of four Pathways to Prosperity Envoys for women's issues, also participated in the dialogue, as did Carmen Irene Alas, the president of the Salvadoran chapter of Vital Voices.

¶2. The participants expressed their appreciation for Secretary Clinton's support for including women's issues under Pathways, and they unanimously agreed that her participation at the October 7-9 Washington conference provided the leadership and inspiration to ensure the initiative's success. The conference established a network of mentors and mentees, with representatives of both groups present at the lunch. The Salvadoran mentors said they were pleased to share their experiences with their assigned mentees, who come from other countries in Latin America. The Salvadoran mentees said they appreciated the opportunity to learn from the mentors. The women entrepreneurs also reported that trade with the USA had expanded with CAFTA: a small businesswoman said she increased her payroll from twenty to sixty employees.

¶3. During the lunch, Former Foreign Minister Brizuela announced she would be traveling the same day to Lima, Peru and then on to Santiago, Chile to promote the benefits of women's access to trade and their contribution to economic development in the hemisphere. In addition to meeting with U.S. Embassy representatives, Brizuela will met with local leaders and be available for press interviews to discuss the Pathways to Prosperity initiative and promote the regional network of women entrepreneurs developed during the Washington conference.

¶4. Comment: Post was impressed with the positive energy and enthusiasm displayed by the Salvadoran delegation. The women entrepreneurs undertook to expand their participation and dialogue under the Pathways to Prosperity initiative. They also, with our help, will try to get Salvadoran First Lady Wanda Pignato on board.  
End Comment.  
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